

*A recording obtained by The Washington Post captures what New York reporters and editors who covered Trump's early career experienced in the 1970s, '80s and '90s: calls from Trump's Manhattan office that resulted in conversations with "John Miller" or "John Barron" — public-relations men who sound precisely like Trump himself — who indeed are Trump, masquerading as an unusually helpful and boastful advocate for himself, according to the journalists and several of Trump's top aides.*

*In 1991, Sue Carswell, a reporter at People magazine, called Trump's office seeking an interview with the developer. Within five minutes, she got a return call from Trump's publicist, a man named John Miller. Here is a transcript of that call. Audio is available here:*

<http://wapo.st/1WtRdVG>

John Miller: How are you?

Interviewer [Female]: Good. How are you? What's your name again?

John Miller: John Miller.

Interviewer: And you work with [indiscernible]?

John Miller: Yes, that's correct.

Interviewer: John Miller. Can you sort of -- I guess we're going to try and put a story together and we have a deadline of today because our magazine closed, well, basically yesterday but we'll probably get something together -- you know, it's been on the cover both here and the *Post*.

John Miller: Yeah, I saw that.

Interviewer: What kind of comment is coming from, you know, your agency or from Donald?

John Miller: Well, it just that he really decided that he wasn't, you know, he didn't want to make any commitment. He didn't want to make a commitment. He really thought it was too soon. He's coming out of a marriage, and he's starting to do tremendously well financially. As you saw, he got his licenses five to nothing the other day and totally unanimous. And he's really been working hard and doing well. And probably, as you know, there's a real estate depression in the United States and he's probably doing as well as anybody there is. And frankly, he wants to keep it that way. And he just thought it was too soon to make any commitment to anybody.

Interviewer: So what is going to happen when -- is she being asked to leave or is she going to be allowed to stay?

John Miller: Well, he treats everybody well. You know, you don't know him, but he's a --

Interviewer: No, I have met him.

John Miller: Have you met him? He's a good guy and he's not going to hurt anybody. The one article said he was going to throw her out of the apartment is total nonsense. He is going to always treat her well as he treated his wife well. I mean, he paid his wife a great deal of money. He did it in a very bad period of time and, ultimately, that was settled. There were those that say that that was even put that way. I don't know if you heard that but that Trump became poor until he got his divorce. And then all of a sudden, he's been doing very well and I guess you probably heard that, too.

But he treated his wife well and he treated -- and he will treat Marla well. He's somebody that has a lot of options, and, frankly, he gets called by everybody. He gets called by everybody in the book, in terms of women.

Interviewer: Like who?

John Miller: Well, he gets called by a lot of people.

Interviewer: Yeah. Well, what about -- this Carla Bruni, I mean, how important is she right now? Is she [cross-talking]?

John Miller: I think it's somebody that -- you know, she's beautiful. I saw her once quickly and she's beautiful and all, but I think that he's got a whole open field really. A lot of the people that you write about, and you people do a great job, by the way, but a lot of the people that you write about really are -- I mean, they call. They just call. Actresses, people that you write about just call to see if they can go out with him and things.

Interviewer: You can't say, like, did Madonna ever really call?

John Miller: He was so set up with that. You know, Madonna called and what happened -- I mean, I don't know if you want to listen to this.

Interviewer: No, I do.

John Miller: Do you? Do you have a second?

Interviewer: Yeah, obviously.

John Miller: What happened is it was a benefit at the Plaza Hotel which he owned for Vreeland, Diana Vreeland, or no, for Martha Graham. It was a ball benefit for Martha actually just before she passed away. And Madonna was there and she came in a beautiful evening gown and combat boots. She was wearing combat boots, and Trump was asked to go over to meet her. And he was there just for a little while to say hello and to make a speech and make like an introductory speech.

Madonna was in the room, and so somebody from Madonna's entourage, because she comes in with an entourage of dancers and everything else, and somebody from Madonna's entourage came over and said, "Would you go over and say hello to Madonna?" And so he went over and said hello to Madonna and he gave his autograph to the dancers. She said, "These are fans" and all this. "Will you give them the autograph?" So he said, "Best wishes" or something. And then all of a sudden -- and that was the end. And then he said goodbye to her and that was literally the end. He's got zero interest in Madonna. It was literally the end.

And the next day in the newspapers, they had a story that he wanted to go out with her and everything else. Besides that, that she was sitting there with her boyfriend. I think his name was Ward or something --

Interviewer: Yeah, Tony Ward.

John Miller: -- and she was sitting there right with her boyfriend. So, I mean, it wouldn't be appropriate.

Then the next day, there was a story that Trump went to [inaudible] and Madonna was supposedly at [inaudible], and that was another

total nonsense. So, somehow, there was a thing. And then she called recently about this fight and wanted to go out. You know, she's got this PR machine that I guess you people play to very well but it really was nonsense. So, anyway.

Interviewer: I don't think we ever reported that about Madonna and Donald.

John Miller: Well, she called and wanted to go out with him, that I can tell you. And one of the other people that you're writing about -- by the way, I'm sort of new here.

Interviewer: What is your position there?

John Miller: Well, I'm sort of handling PR because he gets so much of it. And frankly, I mean, I could tell you off the record. Until I get to know you, off the record, I can tell you that he didn't care if he got bad PR until he got his divorce finished.

So when he got a lot of bad financial stuff, he liked it because, you know, it was good because he could get a divorce finished. And once his divorce is finished, if you noticed since then he's doing well financially and he's doing well in every other way. The licensing was five to nothing. And people are saying how come all of a sudden he's doing so well? And then I guess *Newsday* about two weeks ago did a story on that. So I've sort of been put in here to handle because I've never seen anybody get so many calls from the press.

Interviewer: Where did you come from?

John Miller: I basically worked for different firms. I worked for a couple of different firms, and I'm somebody that he knows and I think

somebody that he trusts and likes. So I'm going to do this a little part time, and then, yeah, go on with my life, too.

Interviewer: Is he trying to -- I mean, is Marla trying to reconcile all this or is this --

John Miller: Marla wants to be back with him and he wants to be with her, but he just, he just feels it's too soon.

Interviewer: What about the ring?

John Miller: Well, it was never an engagement ring, because that was my first question. It was never an engagement ring. It was a ring -- I mean, he wouldn't buy the engagement ring. Actually, he bought the ring at the Taj Mahal at Tiffany's. The only place that Tiffany's has that, you know, in a hotel is because of his relationship with Tiffany being the neighbor next door to Trump Tower and Tiffany decided to open up a store at the Taj Mahal. And this was a way of giving Tiffany some business in addition to getting Ivan -- getting Marla something that would be nice.

So he did that, and as I told him and other people told him, when you want to buy a present, don't make it a ring the next time. It was a little confusing.

Interviewer: Make it a chain.

John Miller: Make it anything. Anything but a ring, I guess.

Interviewer: Do you think there's any fear that Marla will spill everything at all or -- ?

John Miller: It doesn't matter to him. He truly doesn't care. I've never seen somebody that's so immune, that he gets immune to, you know, some people would say you got bad press three or four months ago. Now, he's starting to get good press where I don't know what you call this but this is a big press.

But I've never seen somebody so immune to -- he actually thrived on the bad press initially. And once the divorce was over, he said, "We have to change this" and it's very interesting. Frankly, if he got good press during the divorce, he'd be in court right now because she settled because she thought that she better believe the press and she settled. And now, he's doing great and now she would like not to settle.

Ivana, when she didn't settle, she made a huge mistake and she's now had a huge fight with her lawyer, Michael Kennedy, over why they made the settlement. And it's over. He sort of laughs at everything.

Interviewer: How does Donald feel about Ivana's [indiscernible] with Barbara Walters?

John Miller: Well, it was a total violation of -- I mean, I could tell you --

Interviewer: Yeah. But then, that was -- I mean, did the judge, Phyllis What's-Her-Name?

John Miller: Gangel-Jacob, yeah, but that's going to be -- the judge felt that when Donald got Ivana to sign that agreement, that Donald got Ivana to void her rights and that the judge was wrong because there's so much case law on that. And what happened is the judge said -- by the way, she can take that clause out. She just said she's not

going to hold Ivana in contempt. In other words, if somebody -- if she violates and she's not going to put Ivana in jail for violating. Okay? So she didn't void that clause.

Now, Donald's got a decision as to whether or not he wants to pay her any more money because by violating that clause, he in theory doesn't have to pay her any money.

Interviewer: Being the good guy that he's trying to be -- I mean --

John Miller: I'm not sure what he's going to do. Again, you could say that she shouldn't have done that either. I mean, you sign an agreement, you go through months and months, and she can't say she didn't know this one. And what he did was smart because he got not only Ivana to sign the agreement, but he got Ivana's lawyers to sign the agreement that she'd do it, that she speaks English perfectly, that everything in the agreement is known and studied and everything else.

So, in theory, I think he could probably -- you know, I think that could have cost her many millions of dollars. I don't know that he's going to enforce it or not.

Interviewer: What about that whole thing that was brought up in the news whether Marla wouldn't sign any sort of prenuptial? Did that have anything to do with the ending of the relationship?

John Miller: No, no.

Interviewer: Was that true? I mean, was he trying to get her to sign anything?

John Miller: Well, I can tell you this. Just off the record, there's no way he gets married without a prenuptial agreement. You understand that. It was painful but worked in the Ivana case because, you know, while it was challenged, it still ended up being upheld and worked. And frankly, she got not exactly one penny, she didn't get one penny more than what the agreement called for. So that's that. And she spent a lot of money on lawyers and a lot of money on everything and that was the year of the circus, but they do stand up.

I can tell you there was never any talk of marriage from Donald's point of view. I can also say that Marla would've liked to get married, obviously, but it was just something he didn't want to do. It's just too soon. And, you know, hopefully, he'll maintain a good relationship with Marla. [Indiscernible] but it's just too soon.

Interviewer: What about this Ivana thing? It says in the Newsday Trump also told friends that when he and Ivana met last week, she indicated that she would be interested in reconciliation?

John Miller: Ivana wants to get back with Donald, but she --

Interviewer: Really? After saying on Barbara Walters that she never would?

John Miller: What is she going to say? What is she going to say? She's going to say when he's with somebody else and had other people lined up, is she going to say, "Yes, I want to get back. I want to get back." You know, she's a pretty savvy woman and she's not going to say -- I mean, he's living with Marla and he's got three other girlfriends, and then, and she's not going to say, I really want to get back, you know? She wants to get back, she's told it to a lot of her

friends and she's told it to him, but it's so highly unlikely. That's off the record. He left. I mean, it was his choice to leave and he left.

Interviewer: He left for Marla.

John Miller: No, he didn't leave, no. See, that's the biggest misconception of this whole thing. The second question I asked about after the ring was the biggest misconception is he left. He didn't leave for Marla. He really left for himself. He didn't leave for Marla. He never left for Marla. He was going to leave anyway. Marla was there, but he was going to leave anyway. Whether there was a Marla or not he was going to leave anyway.

So now he has somebody else named Carla who is beautiful and I guess you have something on her. I don't know if you do or not.

Interviewer: No, they won't talk about her. He didn't say anything about her. I mean, she's a daughter of who --

John Miller: Well, she's a very successful model, etc., etc. But again, he didn't leave Marla for her. He just wants [indiscernible], he does things for himself. He leaves for himself, he does things for himself. He, when he makes the decision, that will be a very lucky woman. But he's not going to do that until he makes the decision. You know, when he makes the decision, he's very capable of a total commitment when he makes the decision. But he felt it's too soon. Off the record, he probably felt Marla wasn't the right one, or whatever, but he just felt it was too soon.

Interviewer: How did he meet Carla?

John Miller: At the Plaza Hotel, she was doing a Carolina Herrera fashion show.

Interviewer: Was Ivana there, do you think? Does she go to fashion shows?

John Miller: Well she goes to them, but less so since, you know, since --

Interviewer: When did he meet Carla there?

John Miller: Probably a few months ago.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Have they been able to see each other?

John Miller: Well, not really. And again, I heard with Carla -- I mean, I'll give you -- this is getting to be -- this is a little different from what I normally discuss. This is I think an interesting point. Carla is a very beautiful girl from Italy whose father is one of the wealthiest men in Europe.

Interviewer: Who is he? What's the name of her father?

John Miller: Her father's name is -- her name is Carla Bruni Tedeschi.

Interviewer: How do you spell that?

John Miller: I don't know. She doesn't use the last name because it's too complicated, you know [indiscernible]. But anyway, but her father is one of the wealthiest men in Europe. Carla is extraordinarily beautiful and didn't want to be a model except that every time she'd go to a show, [indiscernible] to look, Ralph Lauren and various people would say, Carla, you have to be on the show, etc., etc. So she does all

of the top shows and she's always very busy and very successful, etc., etc. She was having a big thing with Mick Jagger. Did you hear about this?

Interviewer: Well, I've just been reading about it.

John Miller: What happened is she was going with Eric Clapton.

Interviewer: Mick Jagger, who was married at that point?

John Miller: Mick Jagger, as of three months ago she was having a big thing. [indiscernible] What she - Just doesn't want to be in the limelight. What she was having a very big thing with Mick Jagger. And then what happened, she was going with Eric Clapton, and Eric Clapton introduced her to Mick Jagger, and then Mick Jagger started calling her, and she ended up going with Mick Jagger. And then she dropped Mick Jagger for Donald, and that's where it is right now. And again, he's not making any commitments to Carla either just so you understand.

Interviewer: What kinds of things have they done? I mean, do they go out? [Indiscernible]

John Miller: Well, they just get along very good and she's very pretty and all of that stuff. But, you know, he doesn't have any idea who she is, right? When he meets the right woman, it's going to be a great relationship and it's going to be a very, you know, because he believes strongly in the marriage concept. In all fairness, he was married for 12 years and he was happily married for 12, you know, for many of those years, I guess, and he believes in it, especially in this society today, I can tell you. But he believes in it.

Interviewer: Where is he living now? I mean is he --

John Miller: He lives in Trump Tower. He has the apartment at the top of Trump Tower.

Interviewer: Okay. And Ivana also has an apartment at Trump Tower?

John Miller: She has an apartment at Trump Tower, but the court order is that she has to leave within a period of less than a year.

Interviewer: Yeah. Right. Okay. Listen, can I --

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